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COMMUNITY PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

Creating Solutions for Our Future

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Thurston County Mineral Resource Lands Stakeholder Meeting #4 Discussion Topics

Community Vision

The citizens of Thurston County recognize mining as an important part of the rural economy. Mineral resources such as sand and gravel supply materials for road maintenance and construction projects throughout the region. The community seeks a balance between the need for mineral resources and the need to protect the environment and the community from adverse impacts of mining. Good stewardship of mining operations, including reclamation and restoration, takes a partnership among mining operators, county citizens, and regulatory agencies.

Mineral Resource Lands Goals

- GOAL 7.** IDENTIFY, DESIGNATE AND CONSERVE MINERAL RESOURCE LANDS OF LONG-TERM COMMERCIAL SIGNIFICANCE.
- GOAL 8.** ENSURE EXTRACTION ON MINERAL RESOURCE LANDS OF LONG-TERM COMMERCIAL SIGNIFICANCE CAUSES MINIMAL HARM TO THE ENVIRONMENT AND OTHER SURROUNDING LAND USES.

Policies for information:

- **Inventory & Designation update**

- How often does the County update the inventory and designation? *Thurston County could update every 8 years under the GMA update cycle, or during periodic updates - annually or biannually.*
- **Amendment process**
 - What does the individual amendment process for becoming a designated mineral resource land look like?

Policies for conservation of MRL:

- **Notification process and distance**
 - To what distance should surrounding landowners be notified of designated mineral lands? *Currently, plats on or within 1,000 feet are notified; building permits on or within 500 feet are notified; and manufactured or mobile homes on or within 500 feet are notified. Some counties, such as Snohomish, notify landowners within 2,000 feet.*
- **Subdivision policy**
 - Should there be limitations on subdivision of parcels within underlying zones that overlap with Mineral Resource Designation? *For example, the county could limit or prohibit subdivision in RRR 1/5 beyond 5 acres. Snohomish County has a policy prohibiting subdivision in R-5 areas that overlap with mineral lands. However, mineral resource areas in Snohomish have limited overlap with residential areas, whereas in Thurston County a significant amount of mineral resource designation overlaps with rural residential.*
- **Expansion of mineral operations onto neighboring parcels**
 - How should expansion of mineral operations be treated? *Some counties, such as Snohomish, allow expansion of a mineral operation onto an adjacent undesignated parcel provided the original, established operation falls within mineral designation. However, mineral resource areas in Snohomish have limited overlap with residential areas, unlike Thurston County.*
- **Designation at the parcel level**

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- If only a portion of a parcel is designated, how should the parcel be considered for permitting purposes? *Thurston County could consider only the portion of a parcel mapped as designated as eligible for permitting. Alternatively, if a parcel has any designation mapped on it, the County could consider the whole parcel eligible for permitting.*

Policies for balancing other goals and land uses:

- Considering Critical Areas

- Are the provisions in the development code sufficient to protect critical areas?
Thurston County could incorporate supplemental text into Chapter 3 or policies that reference the CAO.

- Agricultural Lands

- The County could develop policies to help conserve agricultural lands that overlap with mineral resource lands.